

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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DepEd reduces unliquidated cash advances

The Department of Education (DepEd) has been implementing stringent fiscal procedures over the past year to drastically reduce unliquidated cash advances from a high of P405 million in 2007 to P71.9 million as of August 31, 2008.

Education Secretary Jesli Lapus has set the institution of fiscal reforms as a top priority in the government's biggest bureaucracy. He assigned DepEd Undersecretary for Finance and Administration Teodosio Sangil to set up measures, particularly on cash advances and to steer personnel to comply with the rules.

Sangil explained that the Department now adheres to the "No liquidation, No Cash Advance Policy," wherein officers or employees with outstanding cash advances are not granted additional cash advances unless their previous accountabilities are fully settled.

To date, most cash advances not liquidated as of December 31, 2007 have been identified as those earmarked for ongoing projects whose implementation have gone beyond the cutoff date, and therefore remain unliquidated.

Sangil noted that the sheer volume of DepEd personnel and distances among offices in all 17 regions have largely caused the difficulties in consolidating reports, including unliquidated cash advances.

DepEd Accounting Division Chief Olive San Pablo said that, "We are in the process of preparing a consolidated report of liquidations as of September 30, 2008."

Meanwhile, adequate monitoring mechanisms are now being undertaken to determine the implementation, or completion of education programs and projects nationwide.

She added that frequent reminders through demand letters are being sent to all regions. Salaries are now also withheld should accountable personnel fail to comply with the rules.

Teacher training, programs and projects implementation and monitoring are activities that require cash advances. Liquidation follows after the activities are completed.

San Pablo added, "The audit findings and observations were thoroughly reviewed and discussed with the Commission on Audit auditors-in-charge."

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